

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1.-15. (Cancelled)

16. (Previously Presented) A method of preparing a tooth as recited in claim 22, further comprising, after the step of removing a portion of the tooth, the step of applying injection paste to the device before the device is placed around the tooth abutment.

17. (Previously Presented) A method of preparing a tooth as recited in claim 22, further comprising, after the step of removing a portion of the tooth, the step of applying injection paste into the sulcus before the device is placed around the tooth abutment.

18. (Previously Presented) A method of preparing a tooth as recited in claim 23, further comprising, after the step of removing a portion of the tooth, the step of applying injection paste to the device before the device is placed around the tooth abutment.

19. (Previously Presented) A method of preparing a tooth as recited in claim 23, further comprising, after the step of removing a portion of the tooth, the step of applying injection paste into the sulcus before the device is placed around the tooth abutment.

20. (Previously Presented) A method of preparing a tooth for a dental procedure comprising the steps of: (A) removing a portion of a tooth to create a tooth abutment; (B) preparing a provisional restoration; (C) adhering material to the provisional restoration; (D) placing the provisional restoration on the tooth abutment; and

(E) exerting pressure on the provisional restoration to pack the material into a sulcus associated with the tooth.

21. **(Cancelled)**

22. **(Previously Presented)** A method of preparing a tooth for a dental procedure comprising the steps of: (A) removing a portion of a tooth to create a tooth abutment; (B) preparing a provisional restoration; (C) placing a device for retracting gingival tissue away from a tooth around the tooth abutment, the device comprising a preformed integral closed loop of material sized and dimensioned to be packed into a sulcus associated with the tooth, the closed loop having an inner surface suitable for placement against the tooth and an outer surface suitable for placement against gingival tissue; and (D) packing the device into a sulcus associated with the tooth by placing the provisional restoration on the tooth abutment on top of the device and exerting pressure on the provisional restoration.

23. **(Previously Presented)** A method of preparing a tooth for a dental procedure comprising the steps of: (A) removing a portion of a tooth to create a tooth abutment; (B) preparing a provisional restoration having a margin; (C) placing a device for retracting gingival tissue away from a tooth around the tooth abutment by releasably adhering the device to the margin of the provisional restoration and then placing the provisional restoration on the tooth abutment, the device comprising a preformed integral closed loop of material sized and dimensioned to be packed into a sulcus associated with the tooth, the closed loop having an inner surface suitable for placement against the tooth and an outer surface suitable for placement against gingival tissue; and (D) packing the device into a sulcus associated with the tooth by exerting pressure on the provisional restoration.

24. **(Previously Presented)** A method of preparing a tooth for a dental procedure as recited in claim 20, wherein the provisional restoration has a margin and the

step of adhering material to the provisional restoration comprising the step of adhering material to the margin of the provisional restoration.